



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

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DEEP-WATER GROUPER COMMERCIAL FISHERY IN GULF OF MEXICO FEDERAL WATERS WILL CLOSE AT 12:01 A.M., LOCAL TIME, JUNE 27, 2006

NOAA Fisheries Service extends commercial season four days due to the effects of tropical system Alberto

Based on current statistics, NOAA Fisheries Service has determined the available commercial quota of 1.02 million pounds for deep-water grouper (misty grouper, snowy grouper, yellowedge grouper, warsaw grouper, and speckled hind) will be reached on or before June 26, 2006. **Accordingly, NOAA Fisheries Service is closing the commercial deep-water grouper fishery in the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone (EEZ) from 12:01 a.m., local time, on June 27, 2006, until 12:01 a.m., local time, on January 1, 2007.** The operator of a vessel with a valid reef fish permit having deep-water grouper aboard must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such deep-water grouper prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, June 27, 2006.

During the closure, the bag and possession limits specified in 50 CFR 622.39(b) apply to all harvest or possession of deep-water grouper in or from the Gulf of Mexico EEZ, and the sale or purchase of deep-water grouper taken from the EEZ is prohibited. The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of deep-water grouper that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, June 27, 2006, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitats through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, over 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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